

Mr. MacNICOL: O.K.? It is not O.K., and I say no Canadian can support a canal running from lake St. Francis that diverts 5,000 cubic second feet from the St. Lawrence, which would injure the harbour of Montreal, as the hon. member knows. Therefore that is totally out of the question.

Now I will go back to where I left off in dealing with two or three other proposals. If the United States engineers are asking for anything, they are asking for a twenty-seven to thirty foot canal, for if the canal were to go through from the Hudson river to lake Champlain—that is, if the height of land were cut down—that would be the depth of the canal. They are opposed to anything less than that; they say a twelve foot canal is not of much use. I believe the present lake Champlain-Hudson canal is a twelve foot canal, with a potential capacity of over 8,000,000 tons per season. How much traffic goes over it? Only 351,000 tons. Why? Because the traffic is not there.

Mr. DUPUIS: It has not twelve feet yet.

Mr. MacNICOL: I am talking of the lake Champlain-Hudson canal, from the south end of lake Champlain to the Hudson river, which is a twelve foot canal. I went over it and photographed it from one end to the other. I photographed the boats on it, though there were very few. There were two or three steel barges carrying oil, which were pushed along by a steam barge. The figures that were submitted were very striking as to the value of the present canal on the Richelieu river. These figures, I believe, were submitted by the Chambre de Commerce of Montreal in opposition to the proposal; that is my memory, though I speak subject to correction. In any case it was a very representative body. The report I have in my hand was prepared by Mr. Graham for M. Lefebvre, whatever body that gentleman is connected with. It was pointed out that in 1935 the Richelieu river canal, from lake Champlain to Sorel, carried traffic in hard coal amounting to 2,114 tons. That is a mere bagatelle, showing a tremendous drop from the high point of 124,000 tons in 1917. The traffic in hay amounted to only 880 tons, though if my memory serves me right, last year we were given figures showing heavy traffic on that canal.

Mr. DUPUIS: The canal is not deep enough; that is the reason for the light traffic.

Mr. MacNICOL: It is plenty deep enough to carry all the traffic that is offering on that canal, and I say that, after having made a thorough survey.

[Mr. Dupuis.]

Mr. RHEAUME: Has my hon. friend the figures before 1930?

Mr. MacNICOL: Yes. Hard coal carried amounted to 23,935 tons and hay to 2,087 tons. Coming back to where I left off, in 1935 no ore, pulpwood or sawed lumber was carried over this canal from Canada to the United States. The total traffic dropped from 669,299 tons in 1910 to the figure I gave a few moments ago, 45,000 tons in 1935. The traffic is not there. I saw the blueprints indicating what is proposed to be done; I went to Montreal in order to look them over, and then I travelled all over the canal. In my opinion it would pay this country forever to carry free any traffic going over that river rather than to launch upon this scheme which will call for a tremendous expenditure of money.

Last year something was said about lands being flooded, and I made a careful survey in that connection as well. By far the major portions of the flooded lands, the engineers tell me, would be in United States territory south of the international border. I asked the engineers where the flooded lands were on the Canadian side.

Mr. RHEAUME: They cover an area about twenty-five miles long on both sides of the river.

Mr. MacNICOL: The banks on both sides of the river are high enough to take all the water flowing in.

Mr. RHEAUME: No, sir.

Mr. MacNICOL: I have not the photographs here, but I can show them to my hon. friend, and my eyesight is pretty good. In any event it was not the river flooding we were told about; it was the flooding of the lands around lake Champlain, and those lands are largely in the states of New Hampshire and New York. By far the larger portion of the water that flows down the Richelieu river originates on the United States side, and if they have floods there, they can take care of them.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I take this stand. Last year we voted half a million dollars, and this year we are asked to vote another half million.

Some hon. MEMBERS: No.

Mr. CARDIN: This is a revote.

Mr. MacNICOL: Well, I am mighty glad to hear that. I hope this will only be re-voted every year and never expended. If that is all that is to be done I have nothing more to say.